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the estate of JOHN HERSEY, late
, deceased. Greeting.
certain instrument purporting to be
ill and testament of said deceased, has
to said Court for probate by Emma
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quested to appear at a Probate Court,
bridge, in said County of Middlesex, on
day of February next, at nine o'clock,
ofore cause, if any you have, against
said petitioner is hereby directed to
e thereof by publishing this citation
three successive weeks, in the new
Massachusetts Ploughman, printed at
publication to be two days at least,
LIAM A. RICHARDSON, Esq., Judge
this twelfth day of January in the
eight hundred and seventy-two.
J. H. TYLER, Register.

MASSACHUSETTS PLOUGHMAN

DEVOTED TO AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE, THE FARM, THE GARDEN, THE FIRESIDE, RURAL LIFE, LITERATURE, USEFUL ARTS, NEWS, &c.

AND NEW ENGLAND AGRICULTURE.

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Editorial

OUR SOIL AND OUR CROPS.

It has become very common to speak of our soil as if it were worn out, exhausted, poor, thin and unproductive as compared with other parts of the country, and the farming sections of other nations. There is, perhaps, some reason for this verdict, but our soil is really not so bad as compared with other farming regions, as many would have us believe. Many add, also, that our climate is rough and unendurable, but it is a curious fact that in the midst of it all, there is the unmistakable evidence of thrift and comfort and prosperity more universal in New England than in any agricultural community on the globe. We never saw a region either in this country or in Europe, where the farming population had, as a whole, better houses, better barns, greater conveniences and more comforts, whether for the family or for the domestic animals, than are to be seen throughout New England.

We speak of the general average of the people and of the rural community. Exceptions there are, no doubt, but let any one *travel through the* country towns of this State, or through Vermont, New Hampshire or Maine, and examine for himself with an impartial eye, and he must come to the conclusion that, as a whole, our people are prosperous, thrifty and comfortable. There is no mistake about this. We have looked over the world about as much as the average of men, have visited nearly every State in the Union, from Maine to California, and travelled over the most of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the best farm countries on the continent of Europe, and can say from personal observation that, taken as a whole, we know of no region where agriculture is pursued at all, that presents greater evidences of prosperity than New England, no region where there is apparently more solid comfort, greater means of intelligence and happiness than among our own people.

Now if our soil is so terribly bad and our climate so vile, as many people would have us believe, we certainly present to the world a curious anomaly. But the fact is our farming facilities, though by no means so good as they might be, are far better than they are commonly represented, our climate less inhospitable, and our soil less exhausted. We are in many respects far better off agriculturally than many a region that possesses a virgin soil, because of our location with reference to markets, and it is a curious fact that, taking the important staple crops as a basis of estimation, we stand ahead of nearly every State in the country in their value, acre for acre.

Hay, for example, throughout all the northern portion of the country, is the leading and most important crop. In some respects it is more valuable than any other, nor can any State at the south, or in a warmer region, where hay is not a necessity for stall feeding in winter, claim any advantage over us in this respect, for it is the best means of keeping up permanently the fertility of the soil. Well, now, the money value of an average acre of hay in this State is $22 75; in New York it is $16 50; in Ohio, $17 50; in Pennsylvania, $13,80; in Illinois, $13 30. Or if you compare the value of other products, acre for acre, cattle, milk, or the dairy, you find the balance clearly in favor of New England. In the average yield per acre of the most important crops, we stand in the front rank.

Indian corn may be regarded as the great national crop. The value of this crop in 1869 was no less than $655,500,000. But that very year we averaged more bushels of corn per acre than any state in the Union except California, Kansas and Nebraska. But the average value per acre of corn that year including fodder, was for Massachusetts $44; Ohio $18; Missouri $18; Michigan $16 80; Wisconsin $15 60; Kentucky $15; Illinois $13-80. The same thing holds good with regard to wheat. No State in the whole country, except Oregon, averages more wheat per acre than Massachusetts, and no State except Vermont averages so much, and the money value of the average crop of wheat is unquestionably greater here than in any other State in the whole country acre per acre.

These are facts, and they are a sufficient answer to those who say that our soil is sterile and too poor to pay for cultivation. Our soil has not always been well treated. It has, on many farms, been run very hard, and little effort has been made to keep it up, in many localities, but it has not lost its vitality yet and it responds to fair treatment about as well as any part of the country. If we are just and honest towards it, we need not fear for the result. If we feed it we shall in turn be fed.

Now we say what we have so often said before, that, though we can raise any farm crop that is adapted to a northern latitude at a profit, there are certain conditions which it is for our own interest to study; that our markets are so handy and so good, as a rule, throughout New England, that we should aim to supply such articles as farmers at a distance cannot supply; articles in which we have less competition from other sections; articles which from their nature do not admit of cheap and easy transportation. If we can make more money in raising small fruits or vegetables, let us turn our hands to them. If we can produce milk and get good pay for it let us turn our attention in that direction and make grass and hay a specialty. A good grass farm is profitable, and if it is not so good as it might be let us aim to make it better.

If some of our people want to emigrate let them go. Emigration has probably never hurt us any, and it has certainly been a good thing for other parts of the country; but let us get out of the habit of decrying our own advantages, our own soil and our own climate. Some people are so constituted that they wouldn't be contented to settle permanently in Paradise. They are restless, uneasy, anxious for change. Sometimes they may better their condition, but many fail to find anything better.

Taking all things into consideration, we think the farmers of New England are about as well off where they are as they could reasonably expect to be any where on the face of the earth. Let us therefore adorn our homesteads, improve our farms and beautify the country about us make better roads, build more for the future, and seek comfort for advancing age among our own people.

Correspondence.

FARMING ON BORROWED CAPITAL.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

I have noticed in the *Ploughman* and other agricultural papers of late the question frequently asked "Does farming pay?" and last week "A Young Farmer" asks "Can a young man succeed in farming on borrowed capital?" He answers emphatically No. The editorial remarks to his question and answer are quite to the point. He might with just as good reason ask if any business can succeed on "borrowed capital" to any great extent. I answer, as my business has been farming about half a century, that success in any business on borrowed capital wholly or in part depends entirely on the industry, economy and business tact of the operator. If a young farmer, who is in debt for his land, wholly or in part, is found attending to village sidewalk gossip one or more days in the week, or takes delight in showing "a splendid turnout," very likely he will be unable to pay his debts. I have known quite a number of young men left with good farms, but owing to the lack of prudence, industry and good management, have failed. I know of scores of farmers that began to work out when of age, who worked several years and saved their wages, then bought farms—mostly on credit—that have paid up all debts and are now well off. There are several such that commenced working out for the writer of this article at ten or twelve dollars per month over thirty years ago, that own good farms, good stocks of cattle and sheep, and money at interest; they have the reputation of being good livers and are made use of as town officers. Farming has paid in these cases, and it has been done on borrowed capital mostly.

One great hindrance to success in business with many young men is, they wish to indulge in all the luxuries and outfits of their successful fathers. "Young Farmer" thinks it very fine to talk about success in farming. The writer of these remarks thinks it is quite as "fine," and more gratifying, to have succeeded in farming on borrowed capital,—he having purchased one hundred acres of good land more than forty years ago, with poor buildings and poorer fences, and a debt of $1,800 on a purchase of $2,200, with an eight year pay day of yearly payments and interest annually. These payments were all met when due from the products of the farm, and in due time several hundred acres have been added to the first purchase; from $8,000 to $10,000 has been expended for buildings, saying nothing about the miles of permanent fences that have been built, and outside investments, off of the farm, of equal amount to the outlay on buildings. No other resources but what came from the farm, and stock raising on the farm, have been used in the above improvements. The stock to start with consisted of one yoke of oxen, one horse, two cows and ten or fifteen common sheep. The oxen and horses have been increased to meet the wants of the farm, and cows sufficient for family use with a small surplus to sell. The sheep stock was gradually increased to about four hundred of fine wool or thoroughbred merinos. This stock has been kept steadily through all the depression in prices in wool or sheep.

AN OLD FARMER.

Woodstock, Vt., Jan. 18, 1872.

FODDER CORN.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

I have read with a great deal of interest the several articles published in the *Ploughman* about raising "corn fodder," but am not fully satisfied with what has been said on this important subject. We are all aware that our New England farms are growing old, and we cannot raise as much hay on them as our fathers did when the soil was new, consequently, we should study diligently how we may manage to keep as much stock as in former times. It seems to me that "corn fodder" is the best substitute we can have, and the question is, how shall we go to work to produce it, and cure it for winter use? My idea is, we should set apart as much land for this purpose as we can get dressing for, and sow in drills, as early as possible in spring. It should be kept free from weeds, as well as all other crops, and harvested into shocks when the top of the spindle begins to dry. Let it stand until well cured, then pack away with straw or meadow hay, sufficient to keep it from heating too much in the mow. I am not fully satisfied which is the best corn to sow, northern yellow or southern white flat. If any of the readers of the *Ploughman* have tried the experiment in this way with both kinds I should like the benefit of their experience.

Yours truly, B. FRANK BROWN.

Tilton, N. H., Jan. 15, 1872.

MILK TO A POUND OF BUTTER.

Editor of Massachusetts Ploughman:

We have three cows, one ten and the others three years last spring. I measured out twenty-two quarts of their milk in the old measure, and the cream of the twenty-two quarts made four pounds and four ounces of butter. I have not seen this beaten. Our cows are the common stock crossed with the Devon. MRS. LEWIS F. DOWNS.

Farmington, N. H.

CARTING MUCK AND LOAM.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

I have just read "Progress," and his remarks in the *Ploughman*, in regard to carting muck and loam to mix with manure, and as I am a young farmer, and guilty of the "folly," I was quite interested in them.

Now I want to tell you and "Progress" what has been my practice in the past in regard to carting muck and loam to mix with manure, and I want "Progress" to tell me how I shall do in the future in order to obtain the best results.

In the first place I have no cellar, but a shed where all the green manure is kept; my yard is in front and lower than the surrounding ground. In the fall I cart muck loam and turf, and cover the bottom over about ten or twelve inches. In pleasant weather, during winter, cattle and sheep are kept in this yard, and all refuse hay, straw, &c., is thrown out to them to pick over. In spring, as soon as frost is out I commence ploughing the yard and harrow thoroughly once in two weeks during the season. All the cattle are yarded and their droppings are mixed in ploughing. In the fall I have sixty loads of compost which is hauled and piled in large heaps to be used in spring. In the spring I hauled my green manure and spread it on the ploughed ground and cultivate it in thoroughly, cut my compost heaps over and use a good shovel full in a hill.

Now if it is the best way for me not to haul anything into my cattle and hog yards, but in the fall scrape them over, and instead of sixty loads of good compost, get three loads of dried and baked droppings, there is lots of hard work saved and I go in for it.

YOUNG FARMER.

Lyman, Me., Jan. 23, 1872.

MILK TO A POUND OF BUTTER.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

I have two heifers, half Alderney and half native, two and four years of age. From six quarts of milk I made one pound of butter. I feed two quarts of wheat bran and eight quarts of turnips each per day, with what good hay they will eat. Who can beat this on half breeds? D. EATON.

Rockville, Ct., Jan. 22, 1872.

The Poultry Yard.

NATURE IN POULTRY BREEDING.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

An article recently appeared in the *Ploughman* over the signature of "B." entitled "Nature in Fowl Breeding." It appeared as number one, the writer promising something further on the subject, for the benefit of farmers and others. Although I do not quite agree with the writer it is an interesting subject, and it is hoped he will redeem his promise. "B" took the ground that the nature of our domestic animals is just what we make it, that the defects of pure bred fowls were caused by mismanagement. It follows of course that when rightly managed these defects should disappear. "B" was going to point out the way; where is he? I do not so much wonder that he pauses as that he should have undertaken such a task.

If the field is too broad, if there are more obstacles to overcome than were at first supposed, let him take one breed at a time; perhaps other writers will come to his help. I would like to suggest the "Dorking" to commence with, (one of our oldest breeds,) and would ask if its nature is not essentially the same to-day that it was a hundred years ago? and if it can be shown that it was ever without its present defects?

Farmers and others have had quite enough of theory placed before them in regard to fowl breeding and management; something practical is what they most need. We all have much to learn on the subject. But it is well to start aright, to understand the nature of the breed or breeds with which we have to do, their excellencies and their defects. Then and then only can we supply their wants and expect a proper return for our care. If "B" can add to the common stock of knowledge in the way he proposes he will receive the thanks of a FARMER.

MATING FOWLS FOR BREEDING.

It is a fact recognized and admitted by all poultry breeders, that in selecting fowls for breeding it is desirable that the ages of the cock and hen should vary. It is generally admitted that the strongest and best chickens are produced from a cockerel and two-year-old hens; but unfortunately, however, the chickens of such parentage have frequently a large proportion of cocks, and therefore it is that breeders prefer a two-year-old cock bird to put with pullets that are full grown. This rule, however, must not be looked upon as imperative as to either case; there are exceptions to both, and good chickens may also be produced from cocks and hens all of the same age. One thing, however, ought always to be borne in mind, that in mating young fowls less than a year old, their chickens will always be backward in fledging; neither do we care to breed from fowls after they have passed the third year.

The male bird has the most influence upon the color of the progeny, and upon what are usually known as the "fancy points," whilst the form, size and useful qualities are principally derived from the hen.

Many otherwise fine cock birds may have some objectionable features about them; they may have some faulty feathers; they may not be as perfect in shape and size as desirable, or they may be somewhat leggy, all or any of which may cause the fancier to hesitate about breeding from them. It ought, however, to be borne in mind that there are but few birds really perfect, and such cocks ought not to be hastily condemned, if the fault be not too glaring. In all such cases the careful breeder will, if possible, select hens having the opposite qualities.

If the comb of the cock be defective, then the hens selected should have theirs perfect; if the cock's legs or back be somewhat long, then the hen's back and legs should be proportionately short. And so, too, of the markings. Where there is any defect in the cock, the hens chosen, in this particular, should be ample; the one great object to be kept in view by the breeder is to endeavor to counteract the bad qualities in the one by the good ones in the other. Let it, however, be borne in mind, that, however excellent in other points, no bad colored or really faulty combed cock or ill-shaped hen should be retained as breeding stock, as they will invariably produce chickens of a very different color.

Then again, as to the crossing of a breed, the cockerels in the progeny will, more or less resemble the father, while the pullets resemble the mother, and a knowledge of this fact is of much importance to those who wish to breed back to the original strain. In the larger breeds it is frequently desirable to increase the size or render more prominent some portion of the body; in such cases a cross with a hen of a foreign breed should be employed. If, on the contrary, it is the plumage which is sought to be modified, then it is the male bird which should be thrown in.

Floriculture.

SPECIAL FARMING.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

In the *Ploughman* of Dec. 16th, I noticed an article entitled "Flower Farming," in which it is stated, that those who are engaged in it are steadily making fortunes by it, and also, if some one branch of ordinary farming is pursued as a speciality, similar results may be expected. For one, I am not at present ready to admit these statements as facts, that is, as the inexorable result of cause and effect; but simply as exceptions to the general rule as in any other case. Although having never been engaged in raising or selling flowers, yet having always lived near Boston, and of late having been "taken in" to, (and by,) Boston, I find I have quite an acquaintance among the florists, and they always seem ready to communicate. Says one who has a large area of glass, "In the winter of 1869 I made a 'big thing' with my violets, but last year they failed, but I saved enough on roses, so as to 'keep along'." Another friend, while engaged in cutting rose buds remarked, "These are nice buds, but at present there is no call for them, and the dealers say that the prospect for good paying sales is not very bright for the coming winter." True, this was quite early in the season, it being the last of October. This man has since leased his greenhouse for a term of years and has engaged in other business. Within a radius of one mile from where I now write, there have been built within the last three years, five or six greenhouses, some of them quite large, for the special purpose of propagating roses, pinks, violets, smilax, etc., for the market. Certainly this would seem to indicate that the business is a profitable one, but when we consider the expense of buildings furnished with steam apparatus for heating, the amount of coal for continuous fires, the liability of blight, mildew, etc., together with the brevity of the flower season, I cannot see how this is a sure road to fortune. To say nothing of those who, having put their last dollar in a business from which they hope to obtain a competent livelihood, find their products confronted in the market by superb flowers sent in from Hon. Mr. A.'s, or Col. B.'s, or Esq. C.'s private conservatory, with orders to the dealers to allow what prices they can afford for them, so that a few more dollars find their way into the pockets of these retired millionares, to the great detriment of the enterprising florist. As regards any one branch of general farming being made a speciality, so that one may depend on realizing a fortune from it, it seems to me quite likely, allowing that everything should work lovely in that direction. Perhaps we make onions our special crop, and the quantity, the season, the market, and everything pertaining favor us. To be sure, we have incurred extra expense, but to offset that we have an extra income, no matter if some of the other crops were a little neglected. Or, we might take two acres of strawberries, or five acres of cabbages, and we might succeed sometimes, but let the maggot ravage our onions, let the frost catch our strawberries, let the drought or the fly take our young cabbages just in the right time to insure their destruction. How now about the profits? I fear it is like putting too many eggs in one basket.

I think our good friend, the late Mr. Buckminster, favored general rather than special farming, feeling assured that this course would in a series of years, considering the capriciousness of the seasons and markets, give the most satisfactory returns.

DORCHESTER.

PRUNING SHRUBBERY.

There is perhaps no subject in horticulture so little understood by amateurs as pruning. The gardener, when he prunes trees and shrubs, does it for the purpose of regulating the crop of fruit or flowers. Besides forming the shape of the subject he operates upon, he has learned to form a limb or branch where they are wanted; also to check the growth so that it will conform to whatever space it may be convenient to confine it. This the amateur may easily learn, if he will but try. Of course he will have to make himself perfectly familiar with the different varieties of shrubs, and their seasons of flowering and habits of growth. All shrubs do not grow alike, as, for instance, the azaleas, daphnes, rhododendron and peony, moutan or shrubbery peony; these are slow growing shrubs, and seldom require any pruning, just sufficient to keep them in shape. If a person ignorant of the characteristics of these plants should undertake to prune them the same as we prune altheas, why, the natural consequence would be total loss of bloom. There are different opinions as to the proper time for pruning. It has been settled as a fixed fact that early in February or March is the best time; but facts are not always correct, although they are said to be stubborn things. Some varieties do not flower until late in the season, such as the rose of Sharon and some of the spireas. These may be pruned any time early in spring, as they produce their flowers on wood of the same season's growth. If these shoots are pruned at the usual season, when all other pruning is done, the crop of flowers is diminished in proportion to the amount of wood taken away. This applies to most of the shrubs which bloom early, and particularly to the syringa Persica, or Persian lilacs; these produce their flowers on the extreme ends of the wood of last year's growth. If these are cut off, the flowers are lost for that season. Our practice has been, of late years, to let all the early blooming shrubs flower, and immediately after to prune them; by adopting this course we have a full crop of flowers, and there is plenty of time to make flowering wood the balance of the season. Some varieties of shrubs are very straggling in their habits of growth, as the Forsythia, Cydonia, japonica and Philadelphus Inodorus—these require very close pruning to keep them in proper shape. The double flowering almond is another of the shrubs that ought never to be pruned until it is done blooming. Pruning for modifying the form of the shrub embraces the management of the plant from the first year of its growth. If it is attended to at this period, it is a very simple matter to have beautifully shaped plants. For small grounds, shrubs are more suitable than trees, on account of the beauty of their different colored flowers and the ease with which they may be kept within bounds. As a border for hedges, to divide different portions of the garden, we would recommend the cydonia japonica, Wigelia and Spiræa Reevesii. Deutzia Scabra grows quite high and makes a capital hedge. They are easily kept in shape by the judicious use of the pruning shears.—THOMAS CAVANAGH, *in the Horticulturist.*

ENGLISH IVY.

The use of English ivies for the purpose of decoating living rooms is more extensive every year and cannot be to highly commended. Being very strong, they will live through almost any treatment; but study their peculiarities, and manifest a willingness to gratify them and they will grow without stint. Most houses are too hot for them, as indeed they are for their owners. Neither plants nor people should have the average temperature over sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit. Take care and not enfeeble your ivies by undue heat or excessive watering, and you will find they will not seem to mind whether the sun shines on them or not, or in what position or direction you train them. Indeed, so much will they do themselves to render a room charming, that we would rather have an unlimited number of them to draw upon than anything else in nature or art. Do you wish the ugly plain doors that shut off your tiny entry from your parlor to be arched or curved like those in the drawing room of your richer neighbor? Buy a couple of brackets, such as lamps for the burning of kerosene are sometimes placed in, and screw them on the sides of the door. Put in each a plant of English ivy, the longer the better; then train the plants over the top, against the sides, indeed any way your fancy dictates. You need not buy the beautiful and costly pots the flower dealer will advise; common glazed ones will answer every purpose, for by placing in each two or three sprays of Coliseum ivy, in a month's time no vestige of the pot itself can be discerned through their thick screen.—*Journal of Horticulture.*

The Orchard.

ABOUT GRAFTING.

Editor Massachusetts Ploughman:

I had in the fall quite a lot of celery which I wished to save through the cold winter, wishing you would have come to our relief early; but in vain. Well, I thought of my book,—"Burr on Vegetables," which every man that has a garden or farm ought to be acquainted with. I go in for "book farming" largely, and have had some good experience in farming, but will look to my friend Burr when I am in doubt. Now I treated it as directed by him, and it was all right. But after everything was frozen up and secured, you, in a late issue of the *Ploughman*, directed us how to protect and save the same. Now that is not taking the "bull by the horns," but by the tail. It was too late. We have many young and inexperienced people that look eagerly to the agricultural works for advice.

I want to hear from you about grafting. We shall soon be at work in the orchard. By the way I saw a man cutting in a young pear orchard one cold day lately, and I thought him a ninny. He must have been ignorant of the effect or wanted to destroy his trees. If he would only purchase "Downing's Fruits and Fruit Trees" he would as soon cut his toes off. But he will say that is book learning. I cut when they will heal quick, and cut smooth,—not break the fragments of the wood nor allow them to lie and rot and never heal. If he would send to the Commissioner of Agriculture and get the reports it would help him and add a store to his information,—what time to cut scions; what part to use, and when to use them; how early; what wax to use and how to use it. I cut when I get ready to graft fresh. No old grafts packed away in sawdust for me. When I take a tree in hand we are firm friends always after. I look after its general health as a doctor does after a good fat patient. I use wax of my own make, use warm, not hot, with a strip of rag about two inches wide dipped in the wax and wrapped around the graft, using all due care, for without care there is no great success; don't believe in luck. Fill the space between the grafts with wax and put a piece of cloth on top to keep out the water, and nine out of ten grafts will live and do well. Look well after water suckers, and see that no sprouts come out low down to open the split. If a graft is well and properly set, and looked after once in a while, it will do your heart good to watch the progress it will make. Little care does wonders. Now let us hear from you. I am an old subscriber. We will talk currant and currant worms in their season if you wish. My experience tells me of these things after they have passed.

"HARD A STARBOARD."

AGRICULTURE IN CALIFORNIA.

A statement of the agricultural products of California, as shown by the last census returns compared with the same statement for 1860, affords some interesting facts. California is fast becoming more of a farming than a mining State, and some of her productions are as distinctly her own as her gold mines; in regard to live stock the enumeration cannot be complete as in the older States, where every man who has cattle has them kept within such bounds that he knows himself how many he owns. Whatever the reason there are some returns for live stock which evidently cannot be trusted as correct. The difficulties have doubtless decreased in some measure. The following are some of the most striking comparisons:

	1860.	1870.
Acres of land improved	2,668,694	6,518,153
Cash value of farms and farming implements and machinery	$61,295,310	$146,550,718
Cash value of horses	1,690,010	192,272
" milch cows	296,407	164,093
" working oxen	50,094	8,944
" sheep	1,808,092	2,768,187
" of all live stock	25,587,017	22,804,752
" dairying & products	754,233	1,294,490
Bushels of wheat	5,828,470	16,070,702
" Indian corn	510,708	1,221,222
" barley	4,410,426	8,786,690
Pounds of tobacco	3,150	62,809
" butter	3,086,735	7,260,744
" cheese	1,243,089	3,266,074
" hops	80	6,5,094
" honey	12,276	294,326
Gallons of wine	246,518	1,813,586
Tons of hay	305,665	558,778
Silk cocoons		2,587

The whole value of farm products for 1870, including betterments and additions to stock, is estimated at 49,856,024.

☞ Professor Henry says that the "observations of the Smithsonian Institute, which extended over a period of twenty years, have as yet failed to confirm the popular belief that the removal of the forests and cultivation of the soil tend to diminish the amount of rainfall." It is not claimed that these conditions diminished the amount of annual rainfall, but that the equality and distribution thereof is disturbed, there is no question.

Written expressly for the Massachusetts Ploughman.

CAN AN EDUCATED MAN MAKE A LIVING BY FARMING?

BY DAVID Z. EVANS JR.

This question has been so repeatedly asked and answered, with such different results that it is, perhaps, very little that is new that I can say on the subject that will prove novel; however, I will present my views in reference to this matter *in the Ploughman*, hoping that they may throw some light on this theme.

To begin with, I do not advocate, neither do I condemn *in toto*, for an educated man, one who is used to the privileges of a city life, such as are afforded by the numerous institutions of learning, libraries, etc., to embark his means and energies in farming on a venture; for, in the first place, he will have to make up his mind that it is only by a close economy in every particular that anything at all is made at farming; for attention to small matters on the farm constitutes the gains, the small leakages having swamped many an energetic man, whose great fault consisted in thinking that farming was a very profitable occupation; the returns coming, periodically, in a large lump, the small expenditures and wastages not being considered of sufficient moment to be worthy of notice. The greatest drawbacks which an educated man has to contend with when going upon a farm from the city, is being compelled to exercise economy in everything, and keep going all the time from early in the morning until late at night, and confining mind and body to the dull routine of farming. I do not wish to discourage young men from engaging in farming for themselves, but I would respectfully advise them to try it first, for a year or so, with a thorough going farmer, and by that time I think they will be able to decide whether they will like it as an occupation.

I have known some excellent, well-educated business men relinquish business in the city and rush hap-hazard into farming with the idea that all they would have to do would be to reap golden gains, with little or no trouble or exertion on their part. They have read articles on the subject, by inexperienced persons, no doubt, of the glories of farming, of the surety of gains, etc., forgetting that farming is a business and has to be learned as such, and thoroughly, too, to make it successful. In the course of a year or two, perhaps some hold out for three or four, these selfsame persons are only too glad to rush out of farming, and then in every particular condemn farming as a fraud, and a snare in which to entrap the unwary—permit me to add *gullible*—city enthusiasts. They see the fair side of the picture, as given by enthusiastic writers, who do not hesitate to add a great amount of bright coloring, sometimes unthinkingly sometimes purposely, which serves to mislead those who do not know the realities of the case. They embark their all, often, in the enterprise, and when the realities present themselves forcibly to them, they are often thoroughly disheartened, and instead of adapting themselves to circumstances, and naturally endeavor to make a clear way out of the difficulty by close and persistent attention to all the minute details of their business, it very rarely happens but that they give up in dispair and disgust, and are as eager in condemning agriculture now as they were before enthusiastic in its praise.

A man coming to the country from the city, has very much to encounter in the way of different society, indifferently educated people—for the farmers do not, very often have the opportunity to acquire more than an ordinary amount of general knowledge,—want of public libraries and places of interest, and many other petty annoyances, that often harrass and irritate a man of delicate and fine sensibilities and tastes. If he successfully overcomes these considerations, and manfully determines to overlook the very many annoying little things that he daily encounters on the farm, he stands a better chance, in my estimation, of ultimate success, than his brother farmers, although they may have had years of experience; for a good education broadens his mind and renders it capable of picking up information and moulding it to suit his own needs, something which old fogy farmers do not make a practice of doing. I believe an educated man can get a living by farming, but if he goes in without a knowledge of his business, he will be like a man who attempts to navigate without a knowledge of the science of navigation; he may find his way safely into port, but he stands a far better chance of going astray.

So first gain a good insight into the seeming mysteries of farming, by going with some good farmer. You will then have a good opportunity to judge of the quality of the soil, what sort will be best suited to your needs, will see just how to prepare the soil, plant, cultivate and harvest the crops which prove the most remunerative, and in fact very many little items, seemingly small, but in reality, in the aggregate, very large, that you will not find touched at all by writers on the subject; and besides this, practice is far preferable to theory, or at least, to practical details on paper. I may take up this subject again, at some future time, and further dilate on this now important subject, and meanwhile would like to hear what others think of this matter.

Cecil Fruit, Truck and Stock Farm.

BLACK KNOTS ON PLUM TREES.

More than twenty years of culture of plum trees and observation in this and several other States convinces me that the theories of most if not all writers upon the cause of the black knots upon the branches of plum trees are incorrect. The prevailing opinion is that they are the result of the attack of an insect whose purpose is either to suck sap from the branch or to deposit its eggs under the bark.

My theory of the cause of this disease is that the disease is caused by an excess of sap in the branches at a time when the growth of wood and leaves do not absorb it, and when the leaves do not protect the branches from the sun. The ground at that season is usually saturated with water and the heat often extreme; they, acting together, produce a flow of sap which cannot be absorbed by the young leaves, and is therefore detained in the young wood where fermentation takes place, caused by the sun's heat, and the result is the disease described.

The reasons for this opinion are these: the disease seldom ever occurs in the kinds of plums which have an early and luxuriant growth of leaves, such as the Princess Imperial Gage, Jefferson, Orange-plum, and Yellow Gage, but does appear on others growing alongside the above, and growing under precisely the same circumstances, such as Smiths, Orleans, Damson, and Red Gage, which have smaller and fewer leaves than the first mentioned. It seldom ever occurs upon trees root-grafted into the wild plum stock, which develops a small root compared with the top of the tree. It seldom occurs in trees that are making a good medium growth of wood; not too much, or too near, none at all. It does occur most frequently upon trees which stand in a moist, deep, dark, and rich soil, and without a sod upon it; or, in places where the winter snow-drifts remain late in spring retarding the production of leaves until the spring is so far advanced that a few hot days hastens an excessive flow of sap, for which the top of the tree is unprepared.

The only way to prevent this disease is to plant plums upon rather dry soil, of kinds least subject to the blight, and which kinds these are, almost every nurseryman of experience can name in a minute if he will. Mulch with chip-manure four inches deep, and four feet wide around each tree, in March or April, and if the soil is very deep and rich, than root-prune a little once in two years, in the fall, after the leaves have fallen.

MARK W. STEVENS,
Sloansville, N. Y.

Am. Ins. Farmer's Club.

Miscellaneous.

FEEDING HOGS.

There is getting to be a general interest felt throughout the country in the matter of feeding hogs in the most economical manner; or, to state it in another way, how can the largest amount of pork be made in the shortest possible time, with the smallest amount of labor and feed? We suppose, for summer feeding, there is no way preferable to the old way of having good clover fields for swine to run in, and give a good slop once a day made of corn meal. But in our time hogs have to be fed every month in the year, so the question is, what is the best and cheapest food, taking the year through? We are inclined to the opinion that corn in the ear, boiled until it is perfectly soft, is the cheapest feed that can be given, at least so far as all the corn growing districts are concerned. We are satisfied that corn in this condition will go about twice as far as when fed raw and hard; and when boiled in the ear, the shelling and grinding is dispensed with, while the corn, if boiled soft, will go as far fed in the ear, as if it is shelled and ground. So here is an important item of labor and expense saved. But we have a large stretch of country north and west of us coming under cultivation that does not produce corn to any advantage, the season being too cold and short. We are satisfied from recent inquiries made by us, that northern Wisconsin, Minnesota, Dakotah, Wyoming and Colorado, can all raise hogs to good advantage, simply by raising oats and peas for feed. These two articles will grow to perfection in any of the countries named. Oats can be fed in the field without harvesting, to the best possible advantage, and they fatten hogs in the most rapid manner. Peas are the chief dependence in Canada for making pork. We have reliable information that fifty bushels to the acre have been raised in that country, though that is an extraordinary yield, about thirty bushels being an average crop. The vines after the peas are threshed out, are about equal to clover hay for sheep. Peas weigh from sixty to sixty-five pounds per measured bushel, and have considerable more nutriment than the same amount of corn. So we can see no reason to doubt that hogs can be raised to good advantage in all the northern country that we have spoken of. Peas will grow to perfection where oats can be produced. An average crop of peas will count the farmer nearly, if not quite as much, as an average crop of corn, counting the vines as food for sheep.—*Stock Yards Sun.*

CLEANLINESS AND VENTILATION OF CELLARS.

Your article in a late issue on the importance of dry and clean cellars, I read with much interest, and for one, only regret it was not more extended. I have thought much on the subject from boyhood up. Having lived in a large city I saw very many bad effects from foul and dirty cellars, and am sorry to say the evil is worse in smaller places owing to sanitary measures not being so much put in force as in many larger cities. I had occasion within a year past to go into the cellar of a dwelling occupied by one of our *first families*, and to my surprise saw rotten plank and vegetables, and other garbage sufficient to cause me to increase my life policy if I had to live and sleep over their noxious gases; which cannot be avoided, in particular where no ventilation is afforded. I have no doubt there are many heads of families in this city of ten thousand persons who never go into their cellars from one year's end to the other, leaving all such matters to their help. A cellar should be in such order that a person would not be afraid to sleep in it. I know of a person who took the census of this city some years since who made it a point to question families where some of its members were sick with fevers, in relation to their cellars, and many honestly thought they were in good order, when no doubt the cause of sickness arose from the foul gases from the cellar, and in particular I am sorry to say the larger portion of such cases were among our farming population. These statements I believe cannot be denied, and I wish you may be induced to wake up your readers to have them spend a few hours (or cause others to do it for them,) to have clean cellars as well as clean drawing-rooms. Would it not be well to have the subject brought up this winter for discussion in agricultural meetings here, and elsewhere?—*Corres. Me. Farmer,*

TO JUDGE THE QUALITY OF HONEY.

This is an interesting question and one, we believe, not very generally understood. Honey, of course, is judged mainly by its color; but owing to the fact that there is often a very great difference in the color of the comb, and the additional fact that bees often put white honey in dark combs, and vice versa, it is manifest that very great care must be exercised in taking into account both the comb and the honey. The proper way to judge honey is to strain it into glass jars; you can then readily judge of its color. But then there are at least two other qualities to be considered—thickness and flavor. In judging of its thickness, it is necessary for the judge to know whether that quality was imparted in the first instance or whether it is due to the action of light; for light (the chemical rays) act upon honey very much as it does upon the iodide of silver, on the photographer's excited collodion plate.

Take two bottles of honey from the same comb, seal them perfectly tight, and keep them at the same temperature—only one in the sunlight and the other in a dark room, and the former will gradually grow thick and finally assume a semi-chrystaline shape, while the other will retain its original fluidity. This is one reason why bees always work in the dark and why honey should always be kept in the dark or in the obaque vessels.

It would be very improper to award a first prize to a jar of honey that has become thickened by the action of light, because it thereby becomes deteriorated. Still, honey, to be superior, should not be very thin. Flavor is also a very important consideration and must always be required. A good flavored dark honey may sometimes be superior to a white article which looks much better. The thickness and thinness of honey depend upon the source from which it is gathered, rather than upon the secretive action of the bee, whether we admit it or not the insect makes or simply gathers it.—*Sc ntific Press.*

FARMER'S CONVENTION IN MAINE,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

The Maine State Board of Agriculture,

AT PARIS HILL, ME.,

January 23d, 24th, and 25th.

FIRST DAY.

The Maine Board of Agriculture held a public meeting at the Court House, at Paris Hill, on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, January 23d, 24th, and 25th. The proceedings are reported at considerable length in the *Maine Farmer*, from which we present the following abstract. The attendance was good throughout, and the discussions animated and interesting.

On the first day, Mr. Ira C. Doe, Chairman *pro tem.*,

MASS ACHUSETTS PLOUGHMAN AND NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE---BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 1872.

earth at the time of planting, but difference in judgment did not establish the correctness of any method. Trees should not be nearer than three or four feet high. When transplanted these can be set without being staked. The distance between the rows should be from thirty to forty feet, but this depends somewhat upon the variety—some trees need more room than others. Set the trees in the rows as straight as a line can be done. There is economy and beauty in so doing. Never plant a young orchard on land where old trees have decayed and been removed. Roots sometimes extend four or five rods from the trees. Five trees all the roots they will want when old. Plant when the leaves are off and the soil dry. Keep the orchards under cultivation until the trees can maintain themselves when the land is seeded. In young orchards plant low crops—beans, tomatoes, &c. Keep the soil in hoed crops at least ten years after setting the trees before seeding down. In ploughing an orchard use the utmost care in not bruising or injuring the bark and branches, and in not breaking the roots bythe plough. As to manures, avoid green stable manure; ashes, lime, composts, old manure and phosphates are good. When an orchard becomes old, run it to grass and pasture to sheep; they manure it better than any other stock. In a run out orchard of four acres, the soil of which has been treated in various ways, he had pastured sheep with the best results. In 1856 he turned into the orchard what sheep it would carry, keeping the number as near as safety done. In eleven years the net proceeds from fruit from this four acres had amounted to $3,946.66, an annual net profit of $358.79, or more than $100 per acre. The total number of bushels raised in the eleven years has been 6417; the greatest yield in any one year being 1025 bushels, (1870;) the least, 60 bushels, (1871.) The whole number of bearing trees is 220, averaging $1 85 each. He did not believe in ploughing in orchards. The best plan was to get good thrifty seedlings, set them out where they are to grow, and when they want grafting graft where they stand. Did not believe in setting budded trees from the nursery, especially the Baldwin. He entered quite largely into the habits of the bees, and believed in fighting and killing them the first and second years by cutting them out; often-tive swarms were not recommended, as they drove the bestie from the trees to live and from the fruit on bad local trees. It was better to kill them. Soft soap is a good wash for the bark of young trees.

A matter of much importance was in gathering the apples without bruising. They can be preserved to a much longer period by so doing. Gather in a lined half bushel basket, which can be hung on the trees, and turned into the barrel. In packing use good barrels, the inside well washed and dried before the fruit is placed in. In selecting fruit for market, take care in selecting, and thus obtain those that are free from worms, small or poor apples. In packing, first put in a layer of apples on the bottom, stem end down, and when full shake down and turn the bottom end. When opened it will look handsome, and "faced" apples always command a better price. He urged all, young and old, to plant fruit trees. He did not plant poor trees. When he was over forty, and he is now eating the fruit; and old as he is, he has seven acres that he intends to set out to apple trees during the next two years.

Mr. John Stanton Gould, of Dedham, Mass., and Mr. R. Dunham, of Woodstock, followed in some general remarks, after which the Convention adjourned.

The Ploughman.

BOSTON, SATURDAY, FEB. 10, 1872.

☞ Every member of the New England Agricultural Society will receive gratuitously a copy of this week's PLOUGHMAN, containing the reported proceedings of the Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING.
OF THE
NEW ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

The Annual Meeting of the New England Agricultural Society was held in the Meionaon, in this city, on Tuesday last, and was largely attended by representatives of the different State agricultural societies embraced in the organization.

The meeting was called to order at 11 o'clock by the President of the Society, Dr. GEORGE B. LORING.

Address of President Loring.

Gentleman,—The Ninth Annual Meeting of the New England Agricultural Society is full of interest and encouragement to us who laid its foundation and who have conducted its affairs with so much harmony and good feeling since its foundation. The success of the association has been owing to the principle of co-operation on which it was founded, and on the direct appeal it has made to the practical farmers of New England. It has gone on, not as the rival but as the ally of similar societies in the Eastern grou of States; and while it has encouraged the most elaborate investigations into the abstract questions of agriculture, it has gathered together the men of valuable products of agricultural skill from year to year, as an incentive and stimulus and example to every observer interested in the business of farming. The exhibitions of the society have always been successful, and they have increased in interest and in value, culminating in the last exhibition at Lowell, which was acknowledged to be the best of all our collections, and which owed so much of its spirit and attractiveness to the energy of the Middlesex North Agricultural Society and to the liberality of the city of Lowell. It is gratifying to look back and remember the amount of work we have accomplished since our foundation, in doing which we have collected and expended nearly $200,000, $120,00 of which were paid to farmers in premiums alone, for the benefit of the industry which we represent, besides securing for ourselves a treasury with ample funds for our immediate wants. And I think it is reasonable to infer that our own prosperity is an indication of the prosperity of agriculture throughout New England. And that it is prosperous there can be no manner of doubt.

It is true that the character of our agricultural industry has materially changed within the last few years, while the aim has remained the same. We learn with great satisfaction, that although the area of cultivated land in some of the New England States has diminished, the agricultural products of those States have increased both in quantity and value. There are undoubtedly farms in remote sections, whose communication with the markets is interfered with by bad roads, that are reduced in value, and perhaps deserted. They have performed their part of a system of general farming, which was profitable before the days of railroads and manufacturing and commercial towns had changed the character of local markets, and before the supplies of the great staples of food were drawn from the productive lands of the West. But they have their service and the meeting can take such action upon the matter as they please.

The PRESIDENT.—The Chair will state that upon consultation with the Rhode Island delegation, they have expressed the desire that Mr. Pearce should be invited to serve as one of the Committee of Tru-tees, to withdraw it. I state the fact, and the meeting can take such action upon the matter as they please.

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Mr. BROWN, of Framingham, expressed the hope that the next exhibition would be held in some locality more central especially all our children and enterprising labor, farming still presents strong inducements to many; and that labor which is most constantly and liberally rewarded is that which is most skilful and intelligent and judicious owner upon his own acres. Independent agricultural labor properly applied has never yet failed in this country of receiving an ample reward.

It is this fact, and the independent ownership of land going with it, which gives our country its strength and vigor and its great attractions—attractions which we are too ready to forget, and which we hardly realize. Among all the provisions made for the success and happiness of the American people, not one is of more real importance than that which secures to every person an easy occupation of land, with all the rights and privileges which American society bestows. It is not a system of small land-holding, which is so cheap and easy transfer and registration which go with it in this country, which constitutes one of the greatest safeguards of our social and civil system; but the combination of this with a liberal supply of mental and moral culture attainable by all, and the responsibilities of citizenship to which all are born.

We indeed stand out free from the poverty and degradation which too often attend small land-holding on the continent of Europe, and from the system of tenant farming which has so long been in operation in England. Of the former it is unnecessary for me to speak; but to the latter and its causes and their effects I will for a moment, inasmuch as the question of land-holding is now occupying the best English thought, and has even become the topic of discussion in the English statesmen. You cannot have failed to notice the futile endeavors of Mr. Gladstone to settle the Irish land question on the principles of political economy, and the remarkable declaration of Lord Derby that tenant farming is an obstacle in the way of agricultural progress, and that the large land-holding of England has become burthensome to the proprietor to the point of failure, let us glance for a few moments at the views from Sir John Sinclair, the founder of the Board of Agriculture in England and the best agricultural writer there half a century ago. He says: "If a farm is let to a man of the most enterprising and enterprising citizens of Massachusetts had fallen a victim to that ruthless conflagration. For many days his family, and the own which he had built with up his industry and success, were held in painful and anxious suspense over his fate. On his return, not his tenants, but his fellow-citizens, those who had risen with him in a well diffused pro-perity, recognising the goodness of a kind Providence which had brought him again into our midst, gathered in throngs, with appropriate demonstrations, around his dwelling and joined in warm congratulations over the restoration of their friend and benefactor and equal. It is not difficult to see why the tenant speaks for that in many districts the crops of wheat do not exceed an average of seven or eight bushels per acre. How different is the case in this country, where the owner, instead of cultivating his own fields, lets them to another! . . . . . When a tenant has rent to pay to a landlord, it has a strong tendency to make him a bad farmer. Without that spur to exertion, he would not take half that pains he usually does, to cultivate his farm or improve it. The burden of rent is likewise attended with another advantage: for in order to be enabled to pay it, the farmer finds it necessary to supply the markets more regularly. When tenants have no such stimulus, they are indu ed to keep up their produce, that they may enhance its value.

Besides, a tenant who cultivates the soil as a profession, has but one object in view; and he is therefore more likely to manage the concern better than a proprietor wh has often other avocations to distract his attention. Not only is the tenant more attentive to his business, but he carries it on at less expense; his cattle and servants do more work; the produce of his farm is more carefully looked after; and no money is expended, without the full value being received in return."

This is the doctrine which lies at the foundation of that system of farming which impedes agricultural progress in England, and which places the great mass of the community in the hands of a superior and directing body of land owners. And what a contrast it forms to that American system, which clothes a farm with the sacredness of a home and places the owner ship of land at the foundation of a free and industrious society, and rouses all human energy by loading man with the responsibilities of owning and furnishing him with the largest opportunities; and under the law creates equality of inheritance as an indication that one American child has no right to property with another. The transfer of land from landlord to landlord means one thing—the transfer of land from cultivator to cultivator, from one owner and ever different thing. A general distribution of land by sale and purchase, or by inheritance, places society on a vigorous and living foundation, capable of constant renewal and equal to every new emergency. Lord Derby endeavors to show that this state of things actually exists in England, notwithstanding the division of the kingdom into large estates; and such conclusions from a general land holding that he congratulates himself that in the United Kingdom, with 31,000,000 of people, there are 30,000 landed proprietors. To us, however, this would hardly mean a divi-ion of lands. In Massachusetts, with 1,400,000 inhabitants only, there are more than 45,000 recognized farmers, and probably more than 200,000 owners of real estate in large or in small quantities. Land owning here is the rule,—and very successful men, whether he be mechanic or merchant, or in the walks of professional life, usually owns the h use in which he lives, with the garden around it, or a cherished corner of the old ancestral farm. No, sir. Many of our communities, our towns and our equal social relations; it is one citizen rejoicing wi h another in his prosperity, or sympathizing with him in his adversity. What a contrast to the condition of our social and civil system; but the combination of this with a liberal supply of mental and moral culture attainable by all, and the responsibilities of citizenship to which all are born.

Mr. Sumner, who followed in some general remarks, after which the Convention adjourned.

How Much a Year.

—An editorial article appeared not long ago in the New York *Times*, discussing the cost of living in that city for a family of four, with two servants, the scale to be one of comfort and ease, without any luxury whatever. The writer fixed his figures at $5000, and very naturally called out an avalanche of criticisms, protests, and corroborations. It appears that it costs more to live in New York than it does in Boston, and more in both cities than in the country. But after all, it is pretty much as a family determines for itself; it is all important to choose the scale of living first, and then to live up to it. Management is every thing. A great many luxuries are nothing but hindrances to really good living, and are therefore to be cut off and discarded. A few examples of a consistent and courageous economy, we sincerely believe, if offered by those who are now so set as to attract a large share of social attention, would be the most popular and genuine piece of work which they could ever hope to accomplish.

The Alabama Claims.

—The leading English newspapers have been severely criticising the American case presented before the Geneva Board of Arbitrators under the Washington Treaty, on the ground of our claim for indirect and consequential damages, separate from the claims for individual losses. The matter has assumed a shape which has caused much excitement and feeling in both countries, but so far there seems to be no apprehension of a disturbance of friendly relations. The statement has been that the only course for England to pursue is to withdraw from the arbitration if this claim is pressed. The Queen in opening Parliament on Tuesday briefly referred to the subject, and said that this class of claims are not understood to be within the province of the Board, and that a friendly communication has been made to our Government.

Coffee and No Coffee.

—The State Board of Health have made their report to the Legislature, in which the remark occurs that in a lot of coffee submitted for their examination, in a ground state, not a single pound of it was genuine. It was all peas and beans. Now peas and beans hurt nobody very seriously, particularly sheep; but when the head of a family is at the pains and expense to provide coffee as a beverage, he at least has a right to expect that he is going to drink coffee. But the Board of Health add the comment to their reported discovery that dealers in this bogus coffee do not take any pains to conceal the fraud; so long as they can safely sell it for coffee, and especially, so long as they can obtain the coffee price, they are satisfied. And well they might be. But it occurs to some persons to inquire what effect the application of a little *lar* to the case would be likely to have.

The Annexation Spirit.

—In every direction is Boston growing. The spirit of expansion fairly surprises one who takes the trouble to look about him with his eyes open. Of course speculation follows close in the wake of territorial growth, but that is no abuse of the situation; it is to be expected. Speculation tends to keep up the briskness and life of the motion already begun. Some fortunes have been made as by magic in the neighboring towns annexed, and others are in process of sure construction in other directions. The annexation fever is at present breaking out in West Roxbury, Brookline, and Brighton, and one or all of those towns are bound to become integral parts of the city. The future of Boston is a truly great one.

Crime and Punishment.

—It has at last come to be admitted that one of the leading causes of such an irruption of crime as has manifested itself of late, is the notorious uncertainty attending its punishment. New Jersey has just set an example that New York, and in fact other communities, may prudently follow. Let the criminal class understand that they will be overtaken and punished for every infraction of the law, and by the most natural process that class will help to lift the law to the level of a higher respect. It is certainly of punishment that is needed everywhere, not more severe penalties. And even with that all the modern manifestations of benevolence toward criminals are not incompatible.

Return to Specie.

—The Boston Board of Trade is engaged in the business of discovering the shortest, surest and securest way from an inconvertible to a convertible currency. It is debating chiefly the bill introduced into the Senate by Mr. Sumner, of whose nature the readers of the *Ploughman* are already advised. There are few who would not hail the return to specie with joy. A paper currency is really a wanton waste of the substance of an industrious people, and the waste occurs in that endless insecurity and inequality of prices for all the commodities of life. The country has been going along on paper for ten years, dating with New Year's, and it is time some way was discovered out of the difficulty. Senator Sumner observed with much point, on introducing his measure, tha if we resumed specie payments the funding of the public debt at a lower rate would follow as a matter of course. It is a promising symptom when the best minds of the country apply themselves seriously to the study of the problem.

The North End Mission Fair.

—The Fair of the North End Mission—the truest charity in which this community ever engaged—opened in a most favorable and even brilliant manner, on Monday evening last. Nothing could be more propitious than the weather. Music Hall looked like a bower of beauty, with its elegant and profuse decorations, its generous and varied contributions of goods, and its assemblage of well dressed men and women, among whom the fair attendants on the tables were not the least attractive. The business of the Fair set in at once with energy, and the tables have been visited during the week by throngs of purchasers. Everything has been progressing favorably for a handsome footing up for the Mission. The real object of the Fair is to secure a Country Home for the more thorough reform of its beneficiaries, where healthy and pure influences can be brought around them continually. The tables are exceedingly attractive, offering to the eye fancy articles, works of art, home-made cake of every description, cut flowers and boquets of real elegance, gold-fishes and cages of singing birds, art albums, jewelry, tea sets, in china and silver, sewing machines, various articles of furnishing and home ornamentation, and a list of other things which it would occupy too much space merely to mention. Few charity fairs have collected in one assemblage a nobler body of men and women, whose thoughts are devoted to a single purpose. The people have been increasing in numbers within the Hall, as the week wore on, and the enthusiasm carried matters along with remarkable facility and success. The mottoes and transparencies displayed on the walls are fully expressive of the soul that lights and inspires the scene.

The Ames Plow Company.

—The invention of labor saving agricultural implements in many of the departments of farming has within the last decade given as most wonderful impetus to the business of manufacturing tools and implements of every kind known on the farm, from Maine to the Prairies of Illinois and the far West. The amount of capital invested in the business and the number of men employed in it is most surprising to the casual observer. Let him but enter the great establishment of the Ames Plow Company, the leading concern in this part of the country, if not at the head of all, and there he will find a most wonderful collection of all the most improved and best made and constructed agricultural implements. A brief inspection and inquiry into the extent of their business, and of the implements made by them will at once satisfy him of their pre-eminence in their department. Their ploughs are celebrated the world over. Their mowing machines have taken first prizes at most of the important exhibitions in the country. Their horse tedders, horse hay rakes, horse hoes, etc., are pronounced the equal if not superior to those of any other manufacture, and so down through the list. Their high standing and character, their long experience in their chosen line of business, their extensive facilities for manufacturing have given them the highest position. Their customers may be sure that whatever comes from their workshops and warehouses will be made of the best material and in the best and most thorough manner. The company offer whatever they have at the very lowest possible prices, and their terms will be found as low as those of any other house in the country.

A Little More Brains in he Butter.

—The Hon. Daniel Needham in his address before the Dairymen's Convention, said that if farmers and farmers' wives would put a little more brains into their butter;—educate themselves more thoroughly in the art of making and marketing,—they would readily double if not treble the income from this department of their farming pursuit. This is a fact which will well bear repeating.

The Snow Blockade in the Far West.

—The present winter has borne hard on the passenger and freight transportation over the Pacific Railroad. From early in November there has been a series of snow blockades, from which the road had been remarkably exempt in previous seasons. It has happened on many occasions that passengers have been from twelve to twenty days on the road, and serious inconvenience has been caused to Californian storekeepers from delays in getting their goods. Many a Christmas and New Year's trade was lost through the delays caused by the inclement season. Freight in consequence has poured in upon the steamship lines so that their vessels have been crowded. The latest reports are quite as bad as in previous weeks. Trains have been detained at stations for a week or more, and several trains are reported as hopelessly stuck in the snow in places difficult to reach, and the weather is intensely cold.

Meeting of the Trustees of the Mass. Agricultural College.

—At the annual meeting of the Trustees of the Massachusetts Agricultural College, held at the State House on Wednesday, the 7th inst., there was a very full attendance; nearly all the Trustees being present.

His Excellency Wm. B. Washburne was elected President, Col. Wm. S. Clark, V President, Hon. Chas. L. Flint, Secretary, Dr. Nathan Durfee, Treasurer, and Hon. Henry Colt, Auditor.

Col. Wm. S. Clark, Hon. Joseph A. White and Hon. Chas. L. Flint were elected delegates to attend the National Agricultural Convention to be held at Washington on the 15th inst.

A large amount of business was transacted, and after being in session a very long day, the Board adjourned to the second Thursday in April, which will be the time of the regular quarterly meeting.

From the President's report, and from all other statements we were enabled to gather, we come to the conclusion that the College is in a most satisfactory and promising condition.

Pure Milk Association.

—A meeting of persons interested in starting an association for procuring good milk at a reasonable price was held Monday forenoon at No. 158 Tremont street, Rev. E. E. Hale in the chair. Messrs. Daniel Round, Henry F. French and Hammon Reed, a Committee from the Massachusetts and New Hampshire Milk Producers' Association were present, and offered a report, detailing the proposed methods of procedure. Mr. William Emerson Baker, the Secretary, read a very interesting report, which was adop ed.

The following names were reported as a committee on permanent organization: Rev. E. E. Hale, Chairman; Dr. George Derby, Frank B. Fay, Dr. E. H. Clark, Dr. Samuel Greene, Dr. Tarbell, John L. Emmons, Mrs. Car-line H. Dall, Rev. Jacob M. Manning, Rev. John Williams, Mrs. Benjamin H. Greene, Mrs. William Appleton, Mrs. J. C. Johnson, Mrs. Dr. Homans, P. G. Munroe, Mrs. S. T. Hooper, William Emerson Baker.

Adjourned until one week from Tuesday at 12 o'clock.

Mr. Beade's Lecture.

—Another set of timely instructions, with pertinent and convincing illustrations, on "Money, the Way to Make it and Use it," was presented to the public of Boston last Thursday evening by Mr. H. L. Reade; of whose ability to handle such a subject with grace, suggestiveness, and general affect, his interested audience manifested but one mind. The theme was one that is at all times and in all places engrossing in its character, and in treating it Mr. Reade relieved his maxims of all tendency to triteness by his anecdotes respecting the makers and spenders of money, and enforced his rules with a vigor of phrase and dash of illustration that made his performance as a whole a complete success. Of course he does not profess to have discovered any royal road or short cut to fortune, and therefore insists on industrial courage, honor and honesty as still the operative elements in any successful campaign.

DEATHS.

In this city, Feb. 3, at St. James Hotel, of pneumonia, Mrs. Sarah H., wife of Charles C. Bauman, of San Francisco.

In Brighton, Jan. 31st, Alice A., youngest daughter of Emery and Irene Wilson, 23 years.

In Norfolk, Jan. 19, Joseph Thompson, 62 years, 10 mos.

In Cambridge, Jan. 31, William O. Stearns, Esq., 67 yrs.

In West Roxbury, Feb. 3, Charles B., son of Jacob Wentworth, 22 years, 6 months.

In North Billerica, Feb. 3, Edward R. Talbot, 23 years.

In Salem, Mary A., widow of Edward F. Frye, 33; Rose, widow of Miles Costello, 57 years.

In Newburyport, 31 inst., Miss Caroline Pike, 67 years.

In Hingm, Mass, 31 inst., Franklin Blake, son of James Blake, of Dorchester, Mass., 34 years.

In East Randolph, Feb. 3, Elisha Niles Holbrook, 71 yrs., 5 mos., 5 days.

In Longwood, Feb. 5, Rev. Moses Hadley, formerly of Boston, 91 years, 10 months.

In Orleans, Jan. 28, Thatcher Snow, 78 years.

In Sanford, Me., Feb. 1, Thacher Jones, 74 years.

In South Boston, 2d inst., Miss Lydia H. Childs, 70 yrs.

In Dorchester, 2d inst., George Newhall, in his 80th yr.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

Richards' Historical Catechism.

What ones stood upon this little bill near the Bon Ton? A Boston Massmen.

By what was this bill occupied during the war of the rebellion which makes it memorable? By a British fortification which was bombarded by Washington?

What is there near the Great Elm much frequented by the Children in summer for amusement? THE FROG POND.

How is it supplied with water? From Cochituate Lake.

What has been constructed in the Pond which contributes largely to the pleasure of the thousands who often resort to it in summer? A fountain which is capable of throwing the water to the height of ninety feet; a variety of other jets can be readily attached, which, with the charms of music, sometimes attracts a large concourse of citizens and strangers to the spot at the close of a sultry day in summer, where an hour is most delightfully whiled away.

Why do many of the BOYS who find pleasure in visiting the FROG POND look so neat and tidy? Because they buy their "CLOTHING at GEORGE H. RICHARDS' BOYS' CLOTHING BAZAAR.

feb10 At 24 AND 25 DOCK SQUARE. 1t

For every fracture, crack or break,
With GLUTINE may be mended;
Mechanics think it can't be beat,
And ladies say 'tis splendid. 1t
feb10

FINE CARPETS CHEAP.—6 Grelle Tapestry Brussels, cut stock in our retail department closing out at much below cost. Our customers will be furnished promptly at no suits for single rooms or entire dwellings, at our new warehouse, 76 to 81 Friend Street, one and half step from Hanover Street, Boston. NEW ENGLAND CARPET CO. feb3-4t

☞ A protruding toe is not a sightly thing, say nothing about health and comfort. SILVER TIPPED Shoes never wear out at the toe.

For Sale by all Deal-rs. jan29-4t

☞ Do you want the best Shoe ever made, one that will not rip or come apart, then buy the CABLE SCREW WIRE Boots and Shoes—all have the Patent Stamp. jan13-13t

TO HOUSEKEEPERS.

All good housekeepers use the Crescent Soap for cleaning house, to-day, this, to-morrow &c. It will have a polish on the paint different from any other soap
For sale by all grocers. oct28 tf.

Marine Items.

DISASTERS.

Steamer Alliance, from NYork, before reported with shaft broken, was towed into Salem on Sunday.

A cable despatch from the U S Consul at Batavia, states that the steamer Gen Grant was run into by S G Reed, from Shanghae for N York, before reported ashore on coast of Sumatra, had returned, bringing part of the cargo of the ship, and reported that she was leaking slightly, and would float next tide.

Sch Marietta, from Boston for an Eastern port, anchored below Salem on Sat 3d, but parted her chains about 1 o'clock next morning, and ran into the ice in Salem harbor, where she now lies safe, having obtained an anchor and chain from the shore.

Sch Ontario, Parsons, from Calais for New York, with lumber in order, went ashore on Hunter's Point, in the gale AM 31 inst, where she lay in a dangerous position until 5 PM, when she was hauled off by a tug boat, and is now at anchor under Hammond's Flats, waiting until the weather moderates.

WRECKS.

A letter from Capt Barnes, of ship Marengo, of NBedford reports her at Tonghae 21st having taken 40 bbls sperm since last report. Died on board Dec 24th, Albert R. Hughes of Newbury, NY, seaman. She would sail next for Port of Ost Simoi and thence to the Line, and would be at Honolulu 1st of May, to proceed to the Arctic.

A letter from Capt Dow, of bark Harper Brooks of NBedford, reports her at Tombez Jan 31, no report of oil.

A letter from Capt Glass, of sch Frank Allyn, of New London, reports her at Staten Land Nov 7. Had taken 13 bbls sp oil.

Cattle Markets.

Brighton, Watertown, Medford.

FOR WEEK ENDING THURSDAY Feb 7.

Reported expressly for the Ploughman.

Amount of Stock at market

	Cattle.	Sheep.	Swine.	Pairs Fat Cows.	Veals.
This week..	2,597	9,000	00	00	00
Last week..	2l 4	8801	00	7000	00

Left over from last market 00

Prices of Cattle and Sheep.

	Cattle.	Sheep.
Maine.		
G E Foss	8	
J Littlefield	8	
F Libbey	14	
J L Twitchell	18	
Vermont.		
B Dow	4	76
D A Philbrook	19	
D & J Sanborn	7	99
A M Bowen	1	247
C P Field	7	64
F F Allen	7	4
J W Lapoint	6	46
D F W. ell	17	
Vermont.		
Houghton & Wife		100
C W Bowen	72	
M T Shattuck	72	719
G C Chamberlain	16	
H Richardson	30	
H M Jenne	8	10
J Rogers	4	273
S P Pollard	10	38
Lambert Hastings	36	60
D B Dudley	100	1,000
J Robinson	7	60
A Fowler	6	40
C G Ashley	104	1,000
J McCarthy	104	
J Brady	90	
Brown & Burr	4	273
D Fairbanks	17	
M Frost	8	
H Bronck	79	
G W Bailey	28	148
J Richardson	7	80
S Baldwin	4	80
Massachusetts.		
Sanford, Mr., Hatfield		1,000
Sanford, Mr., Hatfield		1,000
Sanford, Mr., Hatfield		1,000

CATTLE MARKET.

—The market yesterday was a fair week, and prices of Sheep a general quality being somewhat and common grades were unchanged. The market some 1,000 head 2 @7 00 @ 7 1 0 lbs. This morning and unchanged since yesterday some 3,0 were reshipped East in cars.

Beef Cattle ranged as follows: 7 00; generally rated first quality—dium or good fair quality at $6 @ 6 75; ordinary to poor at $5 @ 5 75; extra steers, oxen and cows at $ @ $; market to-day $3 lds. Extreme $7 00. Most of the sales were 100 lbs. or the receipts 16 head Ten from Ohio, 246 from West Virginia, — head receipts for the week 3,6 last week, and 1541 same two offerings 641 head were taken by G. sold to country dealers; head to speculators for Eastern for the week 810 head against 34 head same time last year.

The receipts of sheep have been the quantity somewhat better than of but few common sheep received. In fact not an extra sheep is prices, the quote 5 @6 per lb gross. Receipts 1300 last week, and 2031 year.

Hogs have fallen off slightly this week in condition of the market at the the previous prices to advance 0 @ lb.

We quote at $6 @6 10 per 100 lbs net weight, 203 lbs, against 11,487 and same time last year.

CATTLE MARKET.

The event of the market opened under circumstances for drivers and selling the markets at the East were not the decided, to the cellar, prices here for good stock, and the which obliged to take them, drivers ed dismay in finding as soon as they than was paid at the close of the the demand for at the above was better part, and up to the close good 1,000 lbs average sold freely at good for the entire stuff was scarcely was so liberal that the market of the week. The demand for inferior general, New York, Ohio, New Cleveland and Detroit being the stock was shipped.

The receipts of cattle for the week were about 6,000 head, and the and, which leaves about 4,000 head more, and were about the number ago. The total number of hides sold was 95,105 head as against 7-7-being season out yet, by a long the ruling prices of the week were good to choice steers, $7 @8 4 for medium and 4 @6 4 for common and inferior, rough lots.

A good deal of dead Dressed stock on the wharves, and, and for prime sides $5 3 @6 70 was paid. $100 @ 3 per 100 lbs was the top figure. The market at the close of the week, present writing, does have advanced any on the above. —Albany Journal.

CATTLE MARKET.

With a supply of cattle numbering 4,000 in pens on the drives of the previous week's quite a little below, to the market. There was an unusual number of strangers and a good deal of business was transacted, but it was only for the supply and a few extra fine Kansas dressed steers were sold at the highest figure. The number 4,000 head, all of which were sold. —Albany Journal.

PRICE OF STOCKS

Expressly for the Ploughman.

	30
	38
	38
	38
	149
	149
	1074
	153
	153
	1504
	1504
	365

Expressly for the Ploughman.

KITCHEN MARKET.

Week ending Feb. 8, 1872.

RETAIL PRICES

QUINCY MARKET.

Hides & Tallow.		Pork, Lard, &c.	
Hides	4 @5½	Corrected by Flint & Hinkley, No. 28.	
Brighton,	5 @5½	Mess Pork,	19 @20
Cows,	5 @5½	Clear Salt Stripe,	19 @19
Veal Skins,	10 @12	Mess Beef,	
Sheep Skins,	1 @2	Extra Mess,	
Tallow,	5 @5½	Plate Beef,	
Calf Skins,	12 @14	Prime Mess Beef,	
Wool & Hides.		Hams,	13 @14
Corrected by Hinckley & Sons, No. 2 and 12		Corned Shoulders,	9 @10
Fleece,	45 @48	Brisketts,	9 @10
Pulled,	40 @45	Smoked Shoulders,	9 @10
Super Pulled,	45 @48	Smoked Ribs,	9 @10
Extra Pulled,	48 @50	Pork,	18 @20
Unwashed Fleece,	30 @35	Lard,	13 @14
Unwashed Combing,	30 @35	Wool and Hides	
Unwashed Clothing,	30 @35	Corrected by Hinckley & Sons, Nos. 6 and 12	
Pulled Wool,	30 @35	Veal, Long,	10 @13
Super Pulled,	40 @45	Veal, Shoulder,	8 @14
Extra Pulled,	45 @48	Veal, Short,	12 @14
Pelts,	1 @2	Mutton, shoulder,	10 @12
Tallow,	5 @5½	Mutton, Long,	14 @15
Vegetables.		Mutton, shoulder,	10 @12
Corrected by Hinckley & Sons, Nos. 6 and 12		Lamb,	20 @25
Potatoes,	60 @70	Pigs' Feet,	5 @6
Onions,	3 @4	Lard,	13 @14
Squash, Hub,	2 @3		
Oranges, Mediterranean,	3 @4		
Oranges, Havana,	3 @4		
Messina box,	3 @4		
Lemons, box,	3 @4		
White Beans,	2 @2		
Yellow Eyes,	2 @2		
Cranberries,	3 @4		
Apples,	2 @3		
Sweet Potatoes,	2 @2		
Onions,	3 @4	

The Poet's Corner.

CHERSIPHRON.

When to their utmost we have tasked our powers,
And Nemesis still frowns and shakes her head;
When, wearied out and baffled, we confess
Our utter weakness, and the tired hand drops,
And Hope flees from us, and in blank despair
We sink to earth, the face no stern more before
August will smile—the hand before withdrawn
Banish out the help we vainly pleaded for,
Take up our task, and in a moment do
What all our strength was powerless to achieve.

Unless the gods smile, human toil is vain.
The crowning blessing of all work is drawn,
Not from ourselves, but from the powers above.

And this none better knew than Chersiphron,
When on the plains of Ephesus he reared
The splendid temple built to Artemis.

With patient labor he had placed at last
The solid jambs on either side the door,—
And now for many a weary day he strove
With many a plan and many a fresh device,
Still seeking and still failing, on these jambs
Level to lay the lintel's massive weight.
Still it defied him,—and worn out at last,
Along the steps he laid him down at night.
Sleep would not come. With dull distracting pain
The problem hunted through his feverish thoughts,
Till in his dark despair he longed for death,
And threatened his own life with his own hand.

Peace came at last upon him—and he slept;
And in his sleep before his dreaming eyes
He saw the form divine of Artemis;
O'er him she bent, and smiled, and softly said,
"Live, Chersiphron! Who labor for the gods,
The gods reward. Behold, your work is done!"

Then, like a mist that melts into the sky,
She vanished—and awakening, he beheld,
Laid by her hand above the entrance door,
The ponderous lintel level on the jambs.

Blackwood's Magazine.

Ladies' Department.

HOW ONE WOMAN KEPT HER HUSBAND.

CONCLUDED.

"Sally, I want to tell you in the beginning how I thank you for your silence. All winter I have known that you were seeing all I saw, feeling all I felt, and keeping silent for my sake. I never can tell you how much I thank you; it was an unspeakable comfort to know that you sympathized with me at every point; but to have had the sympathy expressed even by a look would have made it impossible for me to bear up. As long as I live, darling, I shall be grateful to you. And moreover it makes it possible for me to trust you unreservedly now. I had always done you some injustice, Sally. I did not think you had so much self-control."

Here she hesitated an instant. It was not easy for her to mention John's name; but it was only for a second that she hesitated. With an impetuous eagerness unlike herself, she went on.

"Sally, you must not blame John. He has struggled as constantly and nobly as a man ever struggled. Neither must you blame Emma. They have neither of them done wrong. I have watched them both hour by hour. I know my husband's nature so thoroughly that I know his very thoughts almost as soon as he knows them himself. I know his emotions *before* he knows them himself. I saw the first moment in which his eyes rested on Emma's face as then he used them to rest on mine. From that day to this I have known every phase, every step, every change of his feeling towards her; and I tell you, Sally, that I pity John from the bottom of my heart. I understand it all far better than he does. He loves her at once far more, and far less than you believe, and he loves *me* far, far more than you believe! In the wild way, in the absolute idealization of your inexperienced heart, that it is impossible for a man to love two women at once. I *know* that it is not, and I wish I could make you believe it, for without believing it you cannot be just to John. He loves me to-day, in spite of all this, with a sort of clinging tenderness born of this very struggle. He would far *rather* love me with *all* his nature if he could, but just now he *cannot*. I see very clearly where Emma gives him what he needs, and has never had in me. I have learned many things from Emma Long this winter. I can never be like her. But I need not have been so unlike her as I was. She has armed me with weapons when she least suspected it. But she is not after all, on the whole, so nearly what John needs as I am. If I really believed that he would be a better man, or even a happier one with her as his wife, I should have but one desire, and that would be to die. But I know that it is not so. It is in my power to do for him, and to be to him what she never could. I do not wonder that you look pityingly and incredulously. You will see. But in order to do this I must leave him."

I sprang to my feet. "Leave him! Are you mad?"

"No, dear, not at all; very sane and very determined. I have been for six months coming to this resolve. I began to think of it in a very few hours after I first saw him look at Emma as if he loved her. I have thought of it day and night since, and I know I am right. If I stay, I shall lose his love. If I go, I shall keep it, regain it, compel it." She spoke here most hurriedly. "I have borne now all I can bear without betraying my pain to him. I *am* jealous of Emma. It almost kills me to see him look at her, speak to her."

"My poor, poor darling!" I exclaimed; "and I have been thinking you did not feel it!"

She smiled sadly, and tossed back the sleeve of her wrapper so as to show her arm to the shoulder. I started. It was almost emaciated. I had again and again in the course of the winter asked her why she did not wear her usual style of evening dress, and she had replied that it was on account of her cough.

"It is well that my face does not show loss of flesh as quickly as the rest of my body does," she said quietly. I have lost thirty-five pounds of flesh in four months, and nobody has observed it? Yes, dear," she went on, "I *have* felt it. More than that, I have felt it increasingly every hour, and I can bear no more. Up to this time I have never by look or tone shown to John that I knew it. He wonders every hour what it means that I do not. I have never by so much as the slightest act watched him. I have seen notes in Emma's handwriting lying on his desk, and I have left the house lest I might be tempted to read them. I know that he has as yet done no clandestine thing, but at any moment I should have led them both in it by showing one symptom of jealousy. And I should have roused in his heart a feeling of irritation and impatience with me, which would have done in one hour more to intensify his love for her, and to change its nature from a pure, involuntary sentiment into an acknowledged and guilty one, than years and years of free intercourse could do. But I have reached the limit of my physical endurance. My nerves are giving away. I am really very ill, but nothing is out of order in my body aside from the effects of this anguish. A month more of this would make me a hopelessly broken down woman. A month's absence from the sight of it will almost make me well."

I could not refrain from interrupting her. "Ellen you are mad! you are mad! You mean to go away and leave him to see her constantly alone, unrestrained by your presence? It has almost killed you to see it. How can you bear imagining it, knowing it?"

"Better than I can bear *seeing* it, far better. Because I have still undiminished confidence in the real lastingness of the bond between John and me. Emma Long would have been no doubt a good, a very good wife for him. But I *am* his wife, and I am the mother of his children, and just so surely as right is right, and wrong is wrong, he will return to me and to them. All wrong things are like diseases, self-limited. It *is* wrong for a man to love any woman better than he loves his wife; I don't deny that, dear," she said, half smiling through her tears at my indignant face; "but a man may *seem* to do it when he is really very far from it. He may really do it for days, for months—for years, perhaps; but if he be a true man, and his wife a true wife, he will return. John is a true husband and a still truer father. John is mine, and I am his; and I shall live to remind you of all these things, Sally, after time has proved them true."

I was almost dumb with surprise. I was astounded. To me it seemed that her plan was simply suicidal. I told her in the strongest words I could use of the scene of the night before.

"I could tell you of still more trying scenes than that, Sally. I know far more than you. But if I knew ten times as much, I should still believe that my plan is the only one. Of course I may fail. It is all in God's hands. We know of us know how much discipline we need. But I know one thing; if I do not regain John in this way, I cannot in any. If I stay I shall annoy, vex, disturb, torture him! Once the barriers of my silence and concealment are broken down, I shall do just what all other jealous women have done since the world began. There are no torments on earth like those which a jealous woman inflicts, except those which she bears. I will die sooner than inflict them on John. Even if the result proves me mistaken, I shall never regret my course, for I know that the worst is certain if I remain. But I have absolute faith,"—and her face was transfigured with it as she spoke, "John is mine. If I could stay by his side through it all and preserve the same relation with him which I have all winter, all would sooner or later be well. I wish I were strong enough. My heart is, but my body is not, and I must go."

When she told me the details of her plan, I was more astounded than ever. She had taken Dr. Willis into her full confidence. (He had been to us father and physician both ever since our father's death.) He entirely approved of her course. He was to say—which indeed he could conscientiously do—that her health imperatively required an entire change of climate, and that he had advised her to spend at least one year abroad. It had always been one of John's and Ellen's air castles to take all the children to England and to Germany for some years of study. She proposed to take the youngest four, leaving the eldest girl, who was her father's especial pet and companion, to stay with him. A maiden aunt of ours was to come and keep the house, and I was to stay with the family. This was the hardest of all.

"Ellen, I cannot! Do not—oh, do not trust me. I shall never have strength. I shall betray all some day and ruin all your hopes."

"You cannot, you dare not, Sally, when I tell you that my life's whole happiness lies in your simple silence. John is unobservant and also unsuspicious. He has never had intimate relation with you. You will have no difficulty. But you *must* be here,—because, dear, there is another season," and here her voice grew very unsteady, and tears ran down her cheeks.

"In spite of all my faith, I do not disguise from myself the possibility of the worst. I cannot believe my husband would ever do a dishonorable thing. I do not believe that Emma Long would. And yet, when I remember what ruin has overtaken many men and women whom we believed upright, I dare not be wholly sure. And I must know that some one is here who would see and understand if a time were approaching at which it would be needful for me to make one last effort with and for my husband face to face with him. Unless that comes, I do not wish you to allude to the subject in your letters. I think I know just how all things will go. I believe that in one year, or less, all will be well. But if the worst is to come, you with your instincts will f resee it, and I must be told. I should return then at once. I should have power, even at the last moment, to save John from disgrace. But I should lose his love irrecoverably; it is to save *that* that I go."

I could say but few words. I was lifted up and borne out of myself, as it were, by my sister's exaltation of atmosphere. She seemed more like some angel wife than like a mortal woman. Before I left her room at noon, I believed almost as fully as she did in the wisdom and the success of her plan.

There was no time to be lost. Every day between the announcement of her purpose and the carrying it out, would be a fearful strain on Ellen's nerves. Dr. Willis had a long talk with John in his office while Ellen was talking with me. John came home to dinner looking like a man who had received a mortal blow. Dr. Willis had purposely given him to understand that Ellen's life was in great danger. So it was, but not from the cough! At first John's vehement purpose to go with them was written. But she was prepared for this. His business and official relations were such that it was next to impossible for him to do it, and it would at best involve a tremendous pecuniary sacrifice. She overruled and remonstrated, and was so firm in her objections to every suggestion of his of accompanying or following her, that finally, in spite of all his anxiety, John seemed almost pleased at her preference for going alone. In every conversation on the subject I saw more and more clearly that Ellen was right. He did love her—love her warmly, devotedly.

Two weeks from the day of my conversation with her they sailed for Liverpool. The summer was to be spent in England, and the winter in Nice or Mentone.

Alice, the eldest daughter, a loving, sunshiny girl of twelve, was installed in her mother's room. This was Ellen's especial wish. She knew that in this way John would be drawn to the room constantly. All her own little belongings were given to Alice.

"Only think, Auntie," said she, "mamma has given me, all for my own, her lovely toilet set, and all the Bohemian glass on the bureau, and her ivory brushes! She says when she comes home she shall refurnish her room and papa's too!"

Oh, my wise Ellen. Could Emma Long have done more subtly?

Early on the first evening after John returned from New York, having seen them off, I missed him. I said hitherto by myself, "Ah! Mrs. Long's I suppose," and went up stairs to find Alice. As I drew near her room I heard his voice, reading aloud. I went in. He and Alice were lying together on a broad chintz covered lounge, as I had so often seen him and Ellen.

"Oh, Auntie, come here," said Alice, "hear mamma's letter to me! She gave it to papa in New York. She says it is like the sealed orders they give to captains sometimes, not to be opened till they are out at sea. It is all about how I am to fill her place to papa. And there are ever so many little notes inside, more orders, which even papa himself is not to see! only I suppose he'll recognize the things when I do them!"

At that moment, as I watched John Gray's face, with Alice's nestled close, and his arm clasped tight around her, while they had Ellen's letter, a great load rolled off my heart. I went through many dark days afterward, but I never could quite despair when I remembered the fatherhood and the husbandhood which were in his eyes and his voice that night.

The story of the next twelve months could be told in few words, so far as its external incidents are concerned. It could not be told in a thousand volumes, if I attempted to reproduce the subtle undercurrents of John Gray's life and mine. Each of us was living a double life; no more or less unconsciously; I with such sharpened senses, such overwrought emotions, that I only wonder that my health did not give way. I endured vicariously all the suspense and torment of the deepest jealousy, with a sense of more than vicarious responsibility added, which was almost more than human nature could bear. Ellen little knew how heavy would be the burden she laid upon me. Her most express and explicit direction was that the intimacy between our family and Mrs. Long's was to be preserved unaltered. This it would have been impossible for me to do if Mrs. Long had not herself recognized the necessity of it, for her own full enjoyment of John's society. But it was a hard thing; my aunt, the ostensible head of our house, was a quiet woman, who had nothing whatever to do with society, and who felt in the outset a great shrinking from the brilliant Mrs. Long. I had never been on intimate terms with her, so that John and Alice were really the only members of the household who could keep up precisely the old relation. And so it gradually came about that in most of our meetings under each other's roofs, strangers were asked to fill up the vacant places, and in spite of all Emma Long's efforts and mine, there was a change in the atmosphere of our intercourse. But there was enough of intimacy to produce the effect for which Ellen was most anxious, *i.e.*, to extend the shelter of our recognition to the friendship between John and Emma, and to remove from them both all temptation to anything clandestine or secret. They still saw each other almost daily; they still shared most of each other's interests and pleasures; they still showed most undisguised delight in each other's presence. Again and again I went with them to the opera, to the theatre, and sat through the long hours, watching, with a pain which seemed to me hardly less than Ellen's would have been, their constant sympathy with each other in every point of enjoyment, their constant forgetfulness of every one else.

But there was, all this time, another side to John Gray's life, which I saw, and Emma Long did not. By every steamer came packages of the most marvellous letters from Ellen; letters to us all; but for John, a diary of every hour of her life. Each night she spent two hours in writing out the record of the day. I have never seen letters which so reproduced the atmosphere of the day, the scene, the heart. They were brilliant and effective in narrative to a degree that utterly astonished me; but they were also ineffably tender and loving, and so subjective in their every word, that it was like seeing Ellen face to face to read them. At first John did not show them even to me; but soon he began to say, "These are too rare to be kept to myself; I must just read you this account;" or, "Here is a page I must read," until at last it became his habit to read them aloud in the evenings to the family, and even to more intimate friends who chanced to be with us. He grew proud beyond expression of Ellen's talent for writing; and well he might. No one who listened to them but exclaimed, "There never were such letters before!" I think there never were. And I alone knew the secret of them.

But these long, brilliant letters were not all. In every mail came also packages for Alice—secret, mysterious things, which my body could see, but which proved to be sometimes small notes, to be given to papa at unexpected times and places; sometimes little fancy articles, as a pen-wiper, or a cigar case, *half* worked by Ellen, to be finished by Alice, and given to papa on some especial day, the significance of which "only mamma knows;" sometimes a pressed flower, which was to be put by papa's plate at breakfast, or put in papa's button-hole as he went out in the morning. Oh, I was more and more lost in astonishment at the subtle and boundless art of love which could so contrive to reach across an ocean, and surround a man's daily life with its expression. There were also in every package letters to John from all the children; even the baby's little hand was guided to write by every mail, "Dear papa, I love you just as much as all the rest do!" or, "Dear papa, I want you to toss me up!" More than once I saw tears roll down John's face in spite of him, as he slowly deciphered their illegible little scrawls. The older children's notes were as vivid and loving as their mother's. It was evident that they were having a season of royal delight in their journey, but also evident that their thoughts and their longings were constantly reverting to papa. How much Ellen really indited of these apparently spontaneous letters I do not know; but no doubt their atmosphere was in part created by her. They showed, even more than did her own letters, that papa was still the centre of their life. No sight was seen without the wish—"Oh, if papa were here!" and even little Mary, aged five, was making a collection of pressed leaves for papa, from all the places they visited! Louise had already great talent for drawing, and in almost every letter came two or three childish but spirited little pictures, all labelled "Drawn for papa!" "The true picture of our courier in a rage, for papa to see." "The washerwoman's dog, for papa," etc., etc. Again and again I sat by, almost trembling with delight, and saw John spend an entire evening in looking over these little missives and reading Ellen's letters. Then again I sat alone and anxious through an entire evening, when I knew he was with Emma Long. But even after such an evening, he never failed to sit down and write long pages in his journal letter to Ellen—a practice which he began of his own accord, after receiving the first journal letter from her.

"Ha! little Alice, he said, "we'll keep a journal too, for mamma, won't we! She shall not out-do us that way." And so, between Alice's letters and his, the whole record of our family life went every week to Ellen; and I do not believe, so utterly unaware was John Gray of any pain in Ellen's heart about Emma Long, I do not believe that he ever in a single instance omitted to mention when he had been with her, where, and how long.

Emma Long wrote too, and Ellen wrote to her occasional affectionate notes; but referring her always to John's diary-letters for the details of interest. I used to study Mrs. Long's face while these letters were being read to her. John's animated delight, his enthusiastic pride, must, it seemed to me, have been bitter to her. But I never saw even a shade of such a feeling in her face. There was nothing base or petty in Emma Long's nature, and, strange as it may seem, she did love Ellen. Only once did I ever see a trace of pique or resentment in her manner to John, and then I could not wonder at it. Some package had come from Ellen, just after ten one night, and we were all gathered in the library, reading our letters and looking at the photographs—(she always sent unmounted photographs of the place from which she wrote, and, if possible, of the house in which they were living, and the children often wrote above the windows, "*Papa's* and mamma's room," etc., etc.)—hour after hour passed. The hall clock had just struck ten, when the door-bell rang violently. "Good heavens!" exclaimed John, springing up, "that must be Mrs. Long; I totally forgot that I had promised to go with her to Mrs. Willis's party. I said I would be there at nine; tell her I am up-stairs dressing," and he was gone before the servant had had time to open the door. Mrs. Long came in with a flushed face and anxious look. "Is Mr. Gray ill?" she said, "He promised to call for me at nine, to go to Mrs. Willis's, and I have been afraid he might be ill."

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"Oh, Auntie, only think, there was a mis-

PRAIRIE DOGS.

Boys and girls, did you ever see any of those funny little prairie dogs that are so plenty out here on the western prairies? I presume many of you never did, and so I will try to tell you something about them. Well, they look very much like red squirrels with their ears cropped close as a hen's and their tails cut off to three inches long. They live in houses, or holes, in the ground, and usually in "towns," where large numbers are found.

Each family has a house to itself; and such houses! They dig holes in the ground, sometimes quite deep, and always very crooked, and at the top they make mounds about the size and shape of an inverted bushel basket, leaving a funnel-shaped hole in the middle for a doorway. It is hard to get hold of them, for they always run to the mounds at the first intimation of a person approaching, and if shot they fall into the house out of reach; but if not they dive down in a very amusing manner.

At times they are real playful and will chase each other around for awhile, then sit up on their hind legs and make a chuckling noise like laughing, or stand erect on their hind feet and give a squeaking challenge for another race; and off they go. I have often stopped my team and work on the plough to watch them in their antics, and always with increasing pleasure. It took me some time to learn about their ears, for they are hard to get acquainted with. Sometimes I thought they had none; at others, that they had, but kept them laid back like a cross horse when I was near. But after a while they seem